

Executive Registry

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United States Senate

WASHINGTON, D.C. 20510

May 16, 1984

Chrono

The Honorable Kenneth Adelman
 Director
 Arms Control and Disarmament Agency
 Department of State
 320 21st Street, N.W.
 Washington, D.C. 20451

Dear Mr. Adelman:

I have noted the following statement in the Defense Department's Soviet Military Power for 1984:

"As of March 1984, the [Soviet] force numbered 64 submarines fitted with some 936 nuclear-tipped missiles. Two of these submarines do not count toward the 62 SSBN limit established by SALT I."

Leaving aside the fact that the SALT I Interim Agreement and its Protocol expired in 1977 and was not jointly extended indefinitely, I am puzzled by the exclusion of two Soviet submarines from counting above the 62 SSBN limit. Presumably these two submarines are test bed submarines for the SS-N-17 and SS-NX-23. But the 12 SS-N-17 count in the 936 SALT I accountable SLBMs, and the tubes on the SS-NX-23 test bed presumably are also SALT I accountable.

My question relates to how the two Soviet submarines are excluded. I am unaware of anything in the SALT I Interim Agreement, its protocol, or its Agreed Statements or Common Understandings which exclude test bed submarines from counting in the 62 total SSBNs allowed. How did these two SSBNs come to be excluded? Was this exclusion ever reported to Congress? Further, have the Soviets in fact dismantled all the missile tubes and missile bays on their Y class submarines being converted to attack or cruise missile carriers?

Thank you for your prompt answers to my questions.

Sincerely,

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